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Scientists Blame Mystery Forgery Try on Lawyer-Critic

By WILLIAM OVEREND, *Times Staff Writer*

Church of Scientology officials Monday accused a Boston lawyer who has been a prominent critic of the organization of conspiring to pass a counterfeit \$2-million check on the account of Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard and later blaming the forgery on members of the church as part of an "overall plan" to destroy the group.

The charges were made against attorney Michael Flynn in documents filed in Los Angeles federal court in connection with a lawsuit filed by a Scientology member, Steve Miller, accusing the lawyer's brother, Kevin Flynn, of kidnaping him three years ago and attempting to "deprogram" him.

Michael Flynn, who has filed 20 lawsuits against the Church of Scientology, angrily denied the charge and said it was a "typical" Scientology tactic to try to smear critics of the organization.

"There is not an ounce of truth in this story," Michael Flynn said. "This is a conspiracy to frame me. It's absurd; it's a joke. I am not a forger. I'm going to file a criminal complaint against them for this. Somebody is going to pay."

Two-Year Investigation

The Rev. Heber C. Jentzsch, president of the Church of Scientology International, said the accusation against Michael Flynn was made after a two-year investigation into the mysterious forgery attempt in response to renewed claims by Flynn's brother last week that the alleged crime had been carried out by "Scientology insiders" who had access to Hubbard's personal financial records.

"We're clean. We've cleaned out that whole house in the last seven years," said Jentzsch, referring to past legal problems involving the organization, including FBI charges that the group had infiltrated government agencies and stolen government documents pertaining to the church. "They keep making the allegations about us, but we have the documents."

Donald C. Randolph, a Los Angeles attorney representing Miller in the suit against Flynn's brother, said the investigation into the Boston lawyer's activities by the Church of Scientology focused on the testimony of two men who said they had conspired with Flynn to pass the counterfeit check.

The two men were identified as Ala Fadili Al Tamimi, a former resident of Boston currently in jail in Italy awaiting extradition to the United States in connection with another fraud case, and Tamimi's brother, Akil, now a resident of Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates.

Tamimi alleged in a declaration cited in the court records that he met with Flynn in early 1982 and was promised \$400,000 to pass the check. He used his

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brother, Akil, to try to cash the counterfeit check in early 1982 at the Middle East Bank in New York, the declaration said.

Suspecting that something was wrong, officials of the bank raised questions about the check and it was not cashed. In previous court cases against the Church of Scientology, there have been references to the check and suggestions that the counterfeit attempt revealed a plot by Scientology officials to "loot" Hubbard's personal bank accounts.

Hubbard has not been seen in public since 1980. In June, 1983, a Riverside Superior Court judge dismissed a suit by Hubbard's estranged son that claimed his father was either dead or incompetent. A declaration signed by Hubbard introduced as evidence at that trial said that Hubbard was in seclusion by his own choosing. His estranged son, Ron DeWolf, had filed a probate petition.

In the documents filed Monday, Randolph said the DeWolf probate petition was based in part on Flynn's accusations that the attempt to pass the \$2-million counterfeit check had been made by

church members.

"This type of accusation constitutes a classic example of the criminal accusing others of his own crime to divert attention from himself," the affidavit said. "In essence, attorney Michael Flynn orchestrated a conspiracy to break the law, then utilized the thwarted attempt as false evidence in subsequent court proceedings."

Flynn, reached by telephone in Boston, predicted that Randolph's charges, contained in a motion to dismiss his brother's previous claims of Church of Scientology harassment, would be dismissed by U.S. District Judge Francis C. Whelan.

The deprogramming case involving Flynn's brother is in an early stage, with no trial date yet set. The private investigator who brought the charges against Flynn is Eugene M. Ingram, a former Los Angeles Police Department sergeant. Ingram was fired in 1981 from the LAPD on departmental charges of helping run a house of prostitution and protecting drug dealers. Criminal charges were dismissed the following year, however, for lack of evidence.